Silhouette

Vol. 72 No. 2 Ambridge Area High School November 1997

Wish upon a star

by Nicole Webb

Fundraising at Ambridge High seems to be in vogue. From hoagies, pepperoni rolls and candy bars, to raffle tickets, bowl-a-thons and brochure sales, the school year calender is filled with fundraising activities for almost every club and organization in the school.

With all the fundraising, it's not often that the student body gets an update on how much money was raised and what their donated money accomplished. The Interact club, one of the most prolific fundraisers in the school, recently reached an amazing fundraising goal. Interact, with the help of the Ambridge Rotary club, underwrote all the expenses of a wish for a Make-A-Wish child from Baden. Because of Interact's donation of $2000 and Rotary's donation of $1400, eight-year-old Derrick, who was diagnosed with cancer, and his family were able to fly to Disney World on November 23, and stay there for a week's vacation.

Thanks to Mrs. Finnegan's and Ms. Roppa's sixth grade classes at Highland Elementary School, Derrick and his family did not fly to Florida empty-handed. The sixth graders raised $100 for Derrick. This money was used to purchase a Disney-themed send-off basket and the remainder of the money was given to Derrick's family to use in the Disney Park.

This is Interact's first fulfillment of an entire wish. According to Interact Secretary Sara Strano, the club is happy with what they have accomplished. "It is a tremendous feeling knowing you helped someone in need," Sara said.

Make-A-Wish's national organization was founded in 1980. The Western Pennsylvania chapter was founded in Pittsburgh in 1983. To date, the Western Pennsylvania chapter has fulfilled over 2,500 wishes. Recipients of wishes are children between the ages of 2 ½ and 18 who have been diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses.

Nearly 50% of all Make-A-Wish children request a trip to Disney World, Florida. Make-A-Wish encourages the whole family to participate in the wish. The average cost of one wish is $3,400. This figure is based on the cost of a trip to Disney World for a family of four spending six days and five nights.

Mr. DeAngelis's niece was a recipient of a wish. When his niece was two years old, she had surgery in order to remove a malignant brain tumor. Mr. DeAngelis said that his sister was contacted by Make-A-Wish and they asked her what her daughter's wish was. She requested a swing set and a doll house. Make-A-Wish not only fulfilled the wish, but they also threw a party for the young girl while they were building the swing set. Mr. DeAngelis's niece is now thirteen years old.

One example of a very unique wish that was fulfilled through Make-A-Wish was for seventeen year old Chuck, who was confined to a wheel chair because of a serious illness. Chuck loved fishing and he wanted a pond of his own so that he could fish in his backyard. Make-A-Wish found the means to build a dock and a 1/12 acre lake for Chuck. The expense of the total project was $50,000 but because of donations from individuals, the cost was only $4000.

Manager of Development Programs for the Western Pennsylvania Chapter, Marcie Garger said, "We are very proud to say that almost 80% of the children for whom we've fulfilled wishes are alive today." She believes that by helping to make wishes come true for the terminally ill children, Make-A-Wish helps encourage them to live. "Make-A-Wish brings hope and magic to lots of very sick kids," Ms. Garger said.

Ms. Garger's words turned out to be true for Derrick. Without the persistent fundraising of the Interact club, Derrick and his family would not have experienced the magic of the Magic Kingdom. It seems as though dreams really do come true!

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News for November

November ~ Westinghouse Science Honors Institute was attended by Scott Cunningham, Jolene Vanyo, Kristen Baker and Mike Dwyer.

November 1 ~ Ambridge Area Community Taskforce (AACT) netted approximately $8,000 from the Haunted Theater at Ambridge Borough Park. The money will be used to help rebuild Ambridge little league baseball fields.

November 7 ~ Student council held the fall ball in the cafeteria.

November 7 ~ Shannon Kamzelski, Beth Kanfelc, Steve McGuire and Mike Woodling attended the World Affairs Council. The topic was "China: Friend or Foe."

November 8 ~ Majorette LeeAnn Kowal competed and brought home the following trophies: First in Pennsylvania basic strut, second in solo, fancy strut and basic strut, third in Pennsylvania fancy strut and fourth in Pennsylvania solo.

November 19 ~ DECA participated in a pizza eating contest to benefit MDA.

Nov. 27 - Dec. 1 ~ Thanksgiving Vacation

Clarkie explains it all

by Sarah Clark

This is so cool! My very first editorial! I now have the freedom to write about whatever I want... and I can't think of a single thing to say. I really hate it when that happens.

Four years seemed like a long time to me when I was a freshman. Now here I am a junior realizing that I only have two more years left in high school, and it doesn't seem like so much time anymore. I always imagined that by the time I reached this point in my life I'd be a lot smarter than I feel and I'd have something very wise to tell the freshmen. But when it comes right down to it, I only have a few simple tips to offer them as they start their own high school careers:

Always wear sunscreen when you go to Kennywood. If you don't, you end up with really funny tan lines from your T-shirt that take the rest of the summer to go away.

When in marching band, remember that the "perfect" marching step is 22 ½ inches in length. This will appease the almighty band director and keep him from screaming at the band in Italian.

Avoid worrying. Worrying is about as effective as trying to solve an algebra equation by chewing bubble gum. The real troubles in your life will turn out to be things that never crossed your mind.

Remember the compliments you receive. Forget the insults. If you succeed in doing this, tell me how.

Don't read beauty magazines. The only thing you'll get from them is an overwhelming feeling of ugliness.

Respect your elders. You never know when you might need their advice.

Pray.

Stand by your friends. You may need them some day.

Watch all the TV you want. Just don't forget that nothing beats a tree house and a good book.

Turn your library books in on time. Librarians don't like collecting overdue fines anymore than you like paying them.

Clothes and hairstyles don't mean much in the long run. Be careful how you spend your money.

Find your own creative outlet. Just make sure it's legal.

Your parents will always tell you to turn your music down. This is not their fault. Their parents did the same thing to them. I think it's genetic. Try to have patience with them.

Your parents are not always right.

If you feel no one understands you and you don't fit in, congratulations. You're normal.

Things will happen in life that you can't do anything about . You just have to deal with it and move on with your life. If you don't, you're likely to make your situation worse and end up in intensive psychotherapy later on.

If your dog bites you, bite him back.

Never start a fight you know you can't win.

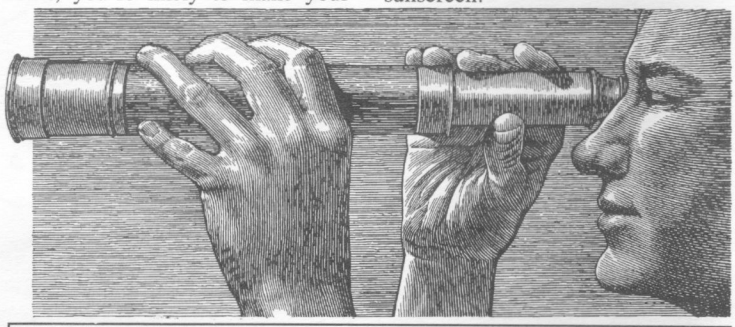
English teachers tend to get upset when you don't have your vocabulary homework done on time. Avoid turning in late assignments and you'll be ok.

Studying by osmosis doesn't work.

Don't explain yourself to other people. You have a right to do whatever you like.

Be careful whose advice you buy. There ARE older students who like to make freshmen look foolish.

But trust me about the sunscreen.



Silhouette

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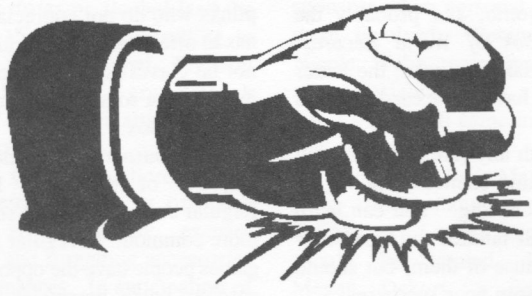
Stop your whining and get involved

by Mike Dwyer



Student Council. National Honor Society. Senior Class. These are some of the most important and prestigious organizations this school has to offer, right? Well, they certainly should be, but is that the actual situation? I was recently involved in a heated discussion on this matter and many students, including myself, are not so sure that these organizations are serving their purpose as well as they should be.

Student organizations generally fit into one of three classifications: those who fundraise for the use of the club members, those who serve the community, and those who serve the entire student body.

The clubs that are chiefly concerned with raising money for their own use are usually extremely successful. Organizations like the language clubs seldom fail in reaching their goals of taking informative, enjoyable excursions and holding several parties throughout the year. It is considerably easier for these groups to raise money because the members know that the money will be for their own use. Therefore, fundraising becomes a more attractive proposition. I am not trying to belittle or insult these groups, I am merely trying to illustrate why other organizations have trouble raising funds.

Community service related organizations are not quite as popular, but they do enjoy a good bit of success. However, these organizations definitely have their share of problems. The greatest of these problems is that much of their work goes unpublicized and therefore, unnoticed. How many students know what ADAPT does for the community? Until recently, I didn't even know what ADAPT stood for. (It's Ambridge Drug and Alcohol Prevention Team.) Another problem facing all organizations, but these ones in particular, is that you get about 15 students that participate in all the club functions, then about 40 other members that just show up for the yearbook picture. Be that as it may, these groups still help people, which is the most important thing.

The third type, the organizations that serve the student body, is the type which has been drawing the most criticism from students. These are the organizations that should have the most profound effect on the lives of students. They should be a link between students and the powers that be. They should leave a mark on the school for future generations. In this respect, I think our student-related organizations fall way short, and I am not the only one that feels this way. While the planning of dances and other social events has a very important place, I think that should take a back seat to the betterment of the school and the relationship between students and administration. For example, the entire nationally televised clothing controversy of a year ago should have first been brought up in form of student government. That is why we have a student government, isn't it? I have heard stories of when our student organizations fought for students rights, passing around petitions and rallying. When is the last time this has happened? Either these organizations need to better publicize their actions or they need to reassess their priorities.

Now, I can sit here with my pen and notebook and whine and whine until I graduate, but that will not change anything. Change requires effort. That's why so many people around here hate it. To improve this situation, WE MUST GET INVOLVED. Speak up at your NHS meeting, join Interact, show up at the next student council meeting or make a proposal at junior class. Just DO SOMETHING. The first step in solving a problem is making a conscious effort to improve. If we don't improve now, it's only going to get worse. So, you have two choices.

1.) Get off the couch and get involved, or 2.) Quit your whining. Decisions, decisions.

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Jeopardy: A lesson in life

by Carole Bunting

Jeopardy. The word jeopardy actually means "to expose to loss or danger." The TV show definitely fits the definition.

Every day, excluding Saturday and Sunday, three people are contestants on *Jeopardy* and throw themselves on the line. They test their intelligence and memory on certain subjects, but, more importantly, they take a risk.

The contestants compete for money, which is always a plus, but they also compete for power. Not many people can say that they are a five-day champion on *Jeopardy*. Those who do succeed in becoming five-day champions become members of an elite society known as the super-intelligent.

Those contestants who do not win on *Jeopardy* are not looked upon so highly. Many people say they fail, but I say they did more than most could. They went on national TV with mostly everyone they knew watching. They took a risk. Many people would not take the first step.

Risk-taking is very important in life. If you didn't get out there and try something new at some point in time, then you'd still be in your mother's womb, and probably the *Guiness Book of World Records*. The more risks you take, the better chance you have of succeeding...and failing.

With any risk you take, you have the same chance of failing as you do succeeding. You can learn from all your failures and be a better person because of them, but should also learn from your successes.

Jeopardy can also be related to stereotypes. Look at the different types of questions they give to different groups of people. Celebrities always get ridiculously easy questions. Do the writers of *Jeopardy* think celebrities lack intelligence? I think they would have a better memory than most due to the amount of lines they must memorize.

Teenagers and college students should get hard questions, simply because they study every day. Every time their teachers give an assignment they learn new things. Students should probably get some of the hardest questions.

Should someone be stereotyped because they fit into a certain category? I hope not all teenagers are classified as ungrateful punks who do not appreciate all life has to offer them. Celebrities should not be classified as mindless idiots, just because some of them appear on the "idiot box."

Tournaments do not fill the majority of the time, however. Regular *Jeopardy* games seem to be more common. In regular *Jeopardy* games people have the opportunity to earn as much money as they can make in five days.

The questions are of average difficulty, some being harder than others. The contestants are quizzed on various subjects; categories range from opera to ancient history to sports.

A *Jeopardy* contestant must be well-rounded in knowledge and character to have a chance at winning. We should all strive to achieve the very things that *Jeopardy* contestants have. Being well-rounded is an extremely important characteristic, as is being educated.

Education is an important aspect of life. An educated person is said to live longer because of the extra activity to the brain. That should be reason enough to complete your high school education and possibly go on to college. The more you learn, the longer you live--it's a great concept.

Anyone can be a *Jeopardy* contestant, but not if you do not apply yourself. Trying out for Jeopardy is taking a risk. Going on national television is a risk.

If you never try out for something you want, then you just took yourself out of the running. No one can achieve anything before putting themselves out on a limb.

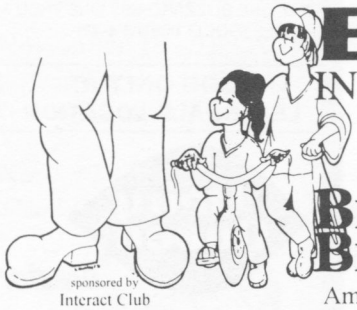
Everyone is their own person, and no one can be classified as being a certain type. In an ideal world, people would make no opinions about a person before really knowing that person.

Any time you find yourself thinking about unfairly judging someone or whether or not you should take that risk, watch an episode of *Jeopardy*. It's a really good show.

This Month in *Silhouette* History...

-- November 1994 ~ The Silhouette runs a hard-hitting, no-holds barred interview with the most controversial figure in the region: The bridger bird.

-- November 1986 ~ Cindy Weber writes about the vital role of organ donors in the medical process.



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Auxiliary members question new policy

by Kristie Miller

Auxiliary members of the Ambridge Area band are receiving letter grades for the first grading period of the 1997-98 school year. Girls who are members of the majorettes, Bridger Belles, Silks and Color Guard squads recently received a report grade based on participation, adherence to rules and attitude.

Prior to the adoption of this policy auxiliaries were regulated by rules in the band handbook. In situations of chronic absence without a medical excuse or other abuse of the rules, there was little recourse from the sponsors.

At a meeting held last summer Mrs. Cole, incoming auxiliary sponsor, and Mrs. Hapich, previous sponsor, met with the captains of the four squads. They reviewed a demerit system used by the cheerleading squad for the 1996-97 season. A grading procedure complete with rules was proposed . One demerit was to be equal to one percent reduction of the letter grade.

Preceeding summer band camp, Mrs. Cole presented the new policy to the girls. Letter grades would be issued to each of the 52 auxiliary members. An eight point list of infractions with corresponding demerits was explained. Smoking and using drugs or alcohol lead the list with 15 demerits, resulting in expulsion from the squad. Physical or verbal fighting, arguing\back talking or showing an attitude to the captain or sponsor evoke five demerits. Other infractions include missing performances or practices without an approved excuse, tardiness, and forgetting accessories for performances. In anticipation of unforseen circumstances the list further states that "Demerits for any other infractions will be decided upon by the sponsor."

According to Mrs. Cole the grades were established to provide more discipline and order to the organization. Band director, Mr. Aloe, stated, "The rules were intended to be a grading system. Band directors in general agree that auxiliaries are their worst headaches."

Initially Mrs. Cole asserted that the new system was fair. Now she has conceded that there were some exceptions. The majority of the girls realize there is a need for rules but most believe the current system needs overhauled. Members have expressed diverse opinions. Several girls believe that infractions were overlooked by captains or sponsors when personal friendships were involved. Senior majorette Nicole Webb maintains "the new system originally was a good idea but it's downfall came in the way it was enforced."

Bridger Belle Marcia Secreet feels, "they should not have a definite set of rules...each situation should be treated differently!" Megan Dekort, a color guard member, declares the new procedure is "not fair because the captains also need checked upon!"

Silk squad member Michelle Farrier believes that a person who doesn't attend should get penalized for not showing up. Majorette Julie George claims "The system promotes favoritism. There is a lot going on behind closed doors that we don't know about..."

The status of the new policy is still unresolved. Input from the 52 girls who are involved could elicit helpful recommendations. Taking things in stride, Raubyn Kokski concludes, "Hopefully the system will be better next year...with proper adjustments."

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Students attend M.A.D.D. Conference

by Emily L. Del Greco

When the phone rang at 11:30 p.m. that April night, Susan Conner did not bother to say "Hello." "Where is he?" she asked.

Approximately one tenth of a mile from his home in New Brighton, John Conner was hit head on by a drunk driver while returning home after working a three to eleven shift. His wife, Susan, knew something was wrong when the phone rang that night. However, she was not prepared to face what used to be her husband after eighteen hours of emergency surgery.

"The doctors told me that he had a 70% chance of recovery with severe disabilities. In my mind, I thought that meant slurred speech, a limp, or maybe a wheelchair," she said.

Since that fateful April night in 1991, John Conner remains in a bed in his home, functioning with total dependency on a feeding tube and the exhaustive support of his wife. The brain damage sustained during the accident reduced Susan's husband to a man whose mentality is similar to that of a three year old.

John's story and the countless stories of other victims, witnesses, emergency crews and innocent bystanders were the focus of the 1997 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Conference held on November 12 at the Monroeville Expo Mart.

Eight Ambridge ADAPT members attended the conference with the hopes of learning more about the senseless tragedies that occur as a result of irresponsible drunk driving. More importantly, though, these students hoped to gain a new perspective on how to prevent them. Tony Cameron, Melissa Coffman, Shayla Dalton, Megan DeKort, Emily Del Greco, Josh Gilmore, Shaun Lyle and Tony Vignere, members of the Ambridge Drug and Alcohol Prevention Team, along with club sponsors Ms. Susan Martell and Mrs. Carol Miloszewski were saddened by many of the stories told at the conference, but learned from them as well.

Much of the conference time was marked with various speakers such as Pancho Harvey, a high school principal whose tear-felt tribute to a friend killed by a drunk driver identified the characteristic pain of such accidents. "Don't think that it can't happen to you," he warned. For Vignere, a sophomore, Harvey's account had the greatest personal impact. "He really got to you, and warned you that you could be here today and gone tomorrow. He told you to express your feelings for people before its too late, because

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Evening program offers hopeful alternative

by Joel Brady

The evening school program, instituted by Ambridge Area High School and funded by the state, provides an opportunity for students who are unsuccessful at school during the day to do well in a different environment.

The program was created last year when Mr. Mullen, then the Ambridge High School vice-princepal, and Mrs. Milo wrote a grant for the program. The first evening classes were held in mid-September of this year. Overseeing the program are Ms. Hufnagel, Mr. Mullen, and Mrs. Milo.

The program's purpose is to provide another, if not a last, chance for unproductive, problematic, or frequently absent students. "I think it's working for the students who find the regular school too confining," said Mrs. Ogrizovich, a teacher involved in the program.

Certain students are required to attend the evening program for a variety of reasons, severe absenteeism is the most common of these. Others must attend because of drug and alcohol offenses. When a problem arises with a student, Ms. Hufnagel, Mr. McClard and Mr Ovial meet to discuss the path the student will take. Options include substituting Class Academy or the evening school program for regular school, or remaining in the regular school with changes made to suit the situation.

Generally, seniors extracted from the regular school attend Class Academy because the Academy offers more credits essential to graduating than the evening school program offers. Drug and alcohol offenders are usually placed in the evening school program. These are general guidelines only; there are many factors that determine each case's outcome, and the administration must weigh each factor before reaching a decision.

Reinstatement into the regular school is possible. Drug and alcohol offenders return to the regular school after their 45-day suspension is served. Students in the program due to severe absenteeism can go back to the regular school if their evening school attendance record is acceptable. Students are reinstated at the discretion of the administrators.

The evening school program runs from 3:30 PM to 7:30 Monday through Thursday, and from 3:30-5:30 on Friday. Social studies is taught on Mondays, physical education on Tuesdays, English on Wednesdays, math on Thursdays, and on Fridays, the curriculum alternates between computer, life skills and physical education. The students meet in the same room and the teachers individualize the program to each student's needs.

Absenteeism is the biggest problem within the program. Students are expected to attend every night; the absentee policy is the same as the regular school's policy: after seven days are missed in a quarter, charges are filed with the magistrate. Of the eleven students enrolled, however, only four to seven are in a class on any given night.

The teachers involved are vital to the program. It is not a mandatory activity for the teachers, and those who volunteer are paid. Those who have been involved in teaching are Mr. Wadding, Mr. De'Angelis, Mr. Zupsic, Mrs. Moon-Kutzavich, Mrs. Shriver, Mrs. Ogrizovich, Ms. Modany, Mrs. Hapich, Mrs. Sickles, Ms. Neely, Ms. Martell, Mr. Hess, Mr. Knopsnyder and Mr. Sangermano. Another integral part of the program is Mr. Eagle, who is in charge of attendance. Ms. Hufnagel commended him, saying, "He is very involved. He goes out to find absentees, makes calls, and puts in a lot of extra hours."

The extremely individualized style of the program has drawn some criticism. Mrs. Hapich, a computer teacher in the program, said, "It's much easier to get good grades in the evening program. Maybe that's what's unfair. Attendance is what counts. All they have to do is show up and they get a lot of attention from the teacher because of the small class size. Students do better [in the program] than in the real class." Mrs. Shriver, an English teacher in the program, points out, "I think that several of the students will benefit a great deal. It's easier for the kids when there are two teachers for seven kids: one teacher to every three students."

Though many teachers and students are wary of calling the program a success, there seems to be an equal number who feel the program is having a positive effect.

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Stallions emerge victorious in Mock Election

by Jackie Stoughton

Surely, many students have noticed the various campaign signs displayed around the high school. Surely many students are also wondering what these signs are all about.

Mr. Tkatch and Mr. Knopsnyder's POD (Problems of Democracy) classes have been working on "Mock Elections" for the last six weeks. The mock elections give students a chance to take part in and better understand politics and the campaigning process. Five classes participated: Mr. Knopsnyder's four classes and Mr. Tkatch's one class.

Each class created a political party. Mr. Tkatch's class was the Wu Party, and Mr. Knopsnyder's four classes included the House Party, Da Mob Party, Stallions Party, and the Chillens Party. The parties were then broken into groups for each office, and a candidate was elected for each office. They chose the fictional names on their own. To campaign they made signs, flyers, videos, campaigned to students before they voted, and even gave out candy.

This is Mr. Knopsnyder's second year at Ambridge Area High School. He also worked with the mock elections last year. This is Mr. Tkatch's first year at the high school and his first year with these elections. They will also be doing this again in the spring sometime, when the second semester POD classes arrive. The course is only offered to seniors.

Everything seems to be going well. Mr. Knopsnyder said that now that the students are a little more involved, they do not complain about the work as much. The students who just did what was needed to get by thought the project was boring. However, the people who were creative loved doing them.

Students seemed to really enjoy the elections, whether they were campaigning or voting. "I think they enjoyed it. I think it gets them out of the book and has them doing hands-on projects rather than reading and doing tactile things. I think overall it's going fairly well. Hopefully they'll understand what goes into campaigning, what people do, to what extent they go to be involved," Mr. Knopsnyder commented.

He said there were only a few real problems. "It's going pretty well, [though it] could be better. I think it could be a little more smoothly run. It's very confusing on who can vote, and who can't."

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Teen Leadership Corps focuses on positive, substance-free policies

by Chris Tuft

In recent years, the statistics involving teenagers and substance related accidents has increased. Since 1988, the Teen Leadership Corps (TLC) has been battling back by promoting a healthier environment for both its schools and communities.

Teen Leaders are nominated by teachers. The names are put through a committee selection process. Once the names have cleared the committee, the students are given the choice of whether or not they wish to join TLC. "Some kids are too busy; some kids work," said Miss Martell who will be sponsoring TLC along with Mrs. Milo.

TLC comes to us through the A.D.A.P.T. club. The four goals of Teen Leaders are: to enhance students' leadership skills, put altruism to work to help others make responsible decisions, promote healthy lifestyles and instill in young people a sense of responsibility to their community environments.

At the end of the year the participants will attend a camp where they participate in a ropes course along with other team building activities. They will return to take what they learned to their schools and communities.

The Teen Leadership Corps has sponsored programs such as Prom Promise, Bobcat Buddies (a mentoring program), Project Graduation, student outreach programs and B.A.D.D. (Beavers Against Drunk Driving). One of their goals is to create a smoke free school.

Above all, TLC focuses on positive, substance -free policies. As Miss Martell says "We have to show kids that they can have fun without all that other crazy stuff."

National Honor Society going the extra mile

by Jessica Balicki

The National Honor Society (NHS) is not all about high grade-point averages; it is also about helping the community. G. P.. A.'s and extra-curricular activities are looked upon when a student is in consideration for membership, but there's more to the NHS than just that.

Last year they initiated a tutoring program, but it wasn't very well known. Vice President Matt Gerega said, "We haven't had a whole lot of luck with that. Students have not wanted to participate." President Andy Zajac said, "The idea behind the tutoring program is that the student that wants help is supposed to go to the Guidance Office. There, they can set up an appointment with a member of NHS who specializes in the area where he\she needs help. Then, you go from there!" So, to any students in need of tutoring: There is help out there, you just have to look!

The main focus of this group is to help less-fortunate people in our community during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. This year for Thanksgiving, they plan to provide food for some local families who are without a Thanksgiving dinner. Then, with the money raised from the sale of pepperoni rolls, the group is looking into the "Give a Christmas" program. This program has children write their Christmas lists and hang them on a tree. Organizations like NHS pick a name off of the tree and buy that child some of the things on his or her list. President Zajac thinks that this is a worthwhile venture on which to spend funds.

The NHS is full of caring students who are trying to get more involved in the community to make it a better place to live. But they can't do it alone. So if you can, buy a pepperoni roll. Go the extra mile to help someone less fortunate than yourself and you will be supporting a great club.

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Students attend M.A.D.D. Conference

continued from page 5

Renowned clinical pathologist and Allegheny County Coroner Dr. Cyril Wecht spoke to the audience of approximately five hundred about the dangers of alcohol poison.

Wecht expressed dissatisfaction with today's society that has yet to form a strong resistance to the dangers of alcohol, whereas smoking and narcotics are distinct targets of opposition. "It is easy to say that you don't smoke anymore . . . but its hard to say that you have given up alcohol altogether . . . because its more accepted." After nearly 13,000 career autopsies, Wecht could personally attest to the gruesome effects of both alcohol poisoning and drunk driving accidents.

The conference's Honorary Chairperson Shelly Duffy, host of the popular B-94 morning show, congratulated the students at the conference for their bravery in facing the devastating problem of drunk driving. Near the close of the conference, Duffy's morning show cohorts John, Dave, and Bubba joined her in sharing their own experiences with victims of alcohol-related accidents.

For many adults attending the conference, the audience of students provided a refreshing look into the positive aspects of today's youth. "In this day and age," said Ms. Susan Martell, "you only hear about the bad things that teenagers do. It was a rewarding and hopeful experience to see so many teens pledging to refrain from drinking and driving."

"A genuinely good person"

by Mike Dwyer

To most people, Suzanne Fleeson is an honor student and volleyball star. After a closer look, though, you will see that this senior is a whole lot more. She is a community servant, a future Navy cadet, a hard worker and above all, a genuinely good person.

With courses like AP Biology, AP Calculus, CP English, GATE economics and physics, Suzanne carries one of the toughest schedules in the senior class. However, her strong work ethic allows her to excel in all of them. "I don't think my classes are that hard," says Suzanne.

In addition to her academics, Suzanne is also actively involved in several clubs. Her activity list includes National Honor Society, ADAPT, Documentary Film Club and Interact. While she values all of these, it is her involvement in the Big Brothers\Big Sisters program that she holds most dear. "It allows me to have a real impact on another person," she explains.

Her work ethic has also brought success on the volleyball court. Recently, "Flea", as she is known to her teammates, was named to the All-Section 6-AAA Second Team as a outside hitter. Suzanne names volleyball as the biggest influence on her personality, next to her parents. "Volleyball has given me leadership skills, confidence, and so much more," she says.

Suzanne reached one of her major goals this year when she was accepted in to the United States Naval Academy. "It hasn't really sunk in yet because of volleyball, but I am already excited and nervous about it." She had made attending the Naval Academy her goal because "It's a huge challenge, not only mentally, but physically as well. It will open a lot of doors and offer me many opportunities."

Suzanne, an Economy resident, attended her first two years of high school at Quigley Catholic. "I was headed in the wrong direction in junior high, " says Suzanne about her reasons for attending a different school. "Quigley was a very positive experience for me. I changed a lot, gained some study habits I lacked in junior high, and took a big step up in my self confidence. I grew as a person."

You won't ever find Suzanne resting on her laurels. She is always working on one thing or another, sometimes to the point that it causes her friends to worry. "You have to challenge yourself constantly and always strive to improve. You should never be content with what you have," she comments.

Although Suzanne enjoys success in many areas, she always keeps her feet on the ground. She is never one to look down upon anyone. She'd rather help them up. Suzanne Fleeson is a great example for any person, high school student or otherwise, to follow.

Mock Election

continued from page 6

Originally the plan was to let only the juniors vote, not seniors, because the seniors were involved in the creation of the parties. Then Mr. Meddock decided to allow his sophomore classes to vote also. It was planned that the sophomores would vote in the spring election. Now it will most likely be the juniors, sophomores and freshmen who will vote then. Mr. Knopsnyder said, "Freshmen will vote in the spring. They were heard; the freshmen *will* vote in the next mock election."

Another bad side in the campaigning was the mudslinging and trash talking. Mr. Tkatch said, "The Wu Party refused to degrade themselves with mudslinging and trash talking. That seemed to motivate people more than anything. Maybe that's the way we have to go to get people interested."

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Bridger Review

☆☆☆☆ Music Review

by Jenni Richards

OK Computer, the newest album form British rockers Radiohead, is a strange and at times hauntingly beautiful piece of work from a band just beginning to make an impact on the world of popular music.

The album opens with "Airbag" and moves directly into the first single, "Paranoid Android", a complex song that alternates between being a hard rock song and sounding like a lullaby. "Exit Music (for a film)" is a soft acoustic number that showcases singer Thom Yorke's voice; the lyrics echo hollowly over the guitar chords.

One of the best songs on OK Computer, and my personal favorite, is the melodious "Let Down". It is about the way people tend to build their hopes and dreams up out of reach, only to be disappointed in the end. "Don't get sentimental," Yorke cautions. "It always ends up drivel."

Much of OK Computer's lyrics deal with the discomfort of living in a cold corporate world of dehumanized technology. "Fitter Happier More Productive" is a monotonous computer monologue detailing the path to "perfection", laid over a fragile piano melody. The catchy song "Electioneering" pushes the focus to the faults of political figures: "I will stop/I will stop at nothing/say the right things/when electioneering."

"Climbing Up The Walls", yet another great track, is a dark, don't-go-in-the-basement type song that seems to deliberately creep along; it sounds as if it were the song for a horror movie.

OK Computer is an album so good that it can hardly be described in words without taking something away from it. I highly recommend not only this record, but any of Radiohead's past albums, such as Pablo Honey, (which includes the hit single "Creep"), The Bends and Fake Plastic Trees. This is definately a great band destined for great things.

☆☆☆☆ Restaurant Review

by Jessica Antonini

When you go out to dinner at a restaurant, what is most important to you? Good food, quick service, reasonable prices, nice atmosphere?

Take it from Jaime Fox when she says, "Max and Erma's has it all!" Max and Erma's Restaurant, Bar and Gathering Place is located on Route 19 between Bob Evans and Lone Star Steak House and across from Eat n' Park. As you head south, turn left at the light. Pictures of Max and Erma are on the wall and on the front of the menu. Speaking of the menu, it has a variety of foods for reasonable prices, including a kid's menu.

While you are waiting for your food, you can look at all of the beautiful antique pictures and clippings on the walls. Within five to ten minutes your food is served. The portions are so large, you may have trouble finishing.

Time for dessert! Check out the sundae bar with a "bathtub" full of fixings. (It's literally a bathtub full of fixings.) They also have a variety of alcoholic beverages, sodas, smoothies and free refills. My only complaint is that they did not have orange pop. Other than that, I enjoyed my dinner at Max and Erma's. I felt that the restrooms and dining areas were immaculate.

So, if you are hungry for great food and a friendly atmosphere (or just need a clean restroom to use), go to Max and Erma's Restaurant, Bar and Gathering Place.

☆☆☆☆ Movie Review

by Adina Protzman

The movie *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, is what I expected it to be and more. This thrill starring Sarah Michelle Gellar (Helen Shivers), Ryan Phillipe (Barry Cox), Jennifer Love Hewitt (Julie James) and Freddie Prinze Jr. (Ray Bronson) is full of action, suspense and good old fashion fear. The mystery starts when the four actors are driving on Reaper's Curve coming home from a Fourth of July party and accidentally hit and kill a pedestrian. The memory of the accident remains with them throughout the year. The following Fourth of July holiday is when the characters start receiving puzzling notes. The note writer states that he\she is aware of "What they did last summer." This is when the twist and turns come about in the movie. You should follow the plot very closely. The location of the scenes with the rocky cliff background gives the viewer an eerie affect when sitting tensely in the movie theater. *I Know What You Did Last Summer* is based on a children's book written by Lois Dunkin. So it may sound familiar to some people. If you are bored one weekend or enjoy psycho thrillers then this is a great movie for you.

☆☆☆ Book Review

by Kristie Miller

Ruby by V. C. Andrews is a thriller. The exciting story takes place in the mysterious Louisiana Bayou. Since her mother died after child birth, Ruby lives with her Cajun grandmother. Grandmere Catherine, a spiritual healer, advises Ruby to be wary of her grandfather, an alcoholic gambler. Grandmere also discourages the relationship with her boyfriend, Paul. As the tale unravels, her dying grandmother divulges that she has a twin sister and a father living in a nearby city. Grandmere further reveals that Paul is her half brother. Following the death of her grandmother, Ruby sets out to find her long-lost family. Her guest leads to further adventures including being committed to an asylum. In this Landy series Andrews has penned a sequel, Pearl in the Midst. If you enjoy suspenseful action loaded with mystery, Ruby will fill the bill.

STAR RATING SYSTEM

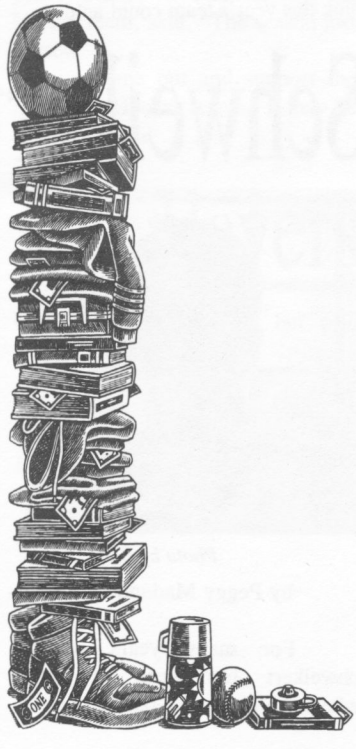
☆☆☆☆	The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show
☆☆☆	Thundercats
☆☆	Jem and the Holograms
☆	Captian Planet

Evening Program

continued from page 6

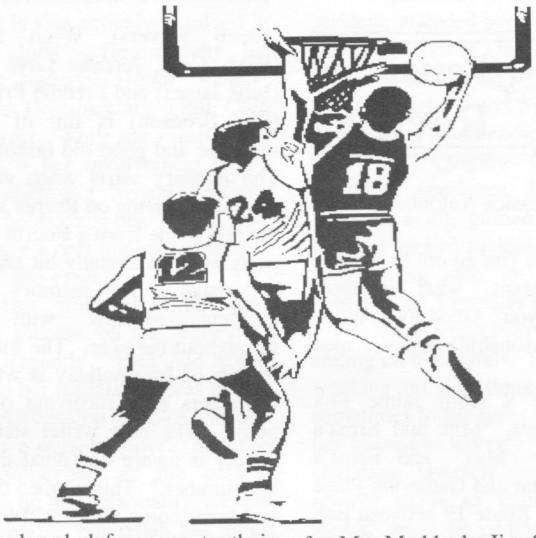
Commenting on the program, Ms. Hufnagel stated, "Yes, I think [the program is successful]. We had three students that passed all the courses last nine weeks, because they got individualized attention. All the others failed because of attendance."

The value worth of the evening school program will be assessed many times during this, its initial year. It remains to be seen whether or not the students, and subsequently the evening school program, will ultimately succeed.



Boys' basketball looks for student body support

by Jessica Antonini



Football is over. Now what do you do with your time? Go see a basketball game. Mr. Meddock, head coach for the boys' basketball team, hopes to see all of your faces cheering on the team this year. "The student body has to adopt the team, accept and be supportive of the team and show up for the games. They are the sixth man of the basketball team. The students are important to our players and they will help us win by being there," stated Mr. Meddock.

Mr. Meddock blames last year's mistakes and losses on himself. He says, "It's not the team's fault, I wasn't as demanding on the defensive side as I should have been and consequently we just didn't play very good defense. That's the main reason the team didn't win more games." That is basically inexperience and now that Mr. Meddock is in his third year as the Ambridge boys' basketball coach, he has higher expectations.

Mr. Meddock said, "This year I want the team to become more competitive, like we were the first year I was here. Last year was a bit of a disappointment as far as our competitiveness went." As always, the team hopes to get into the playoffs and Mr. Meddock states, "I think this year's team could achieve, if they played defense up to their abilities." He continued, "This year's team has a mixture of young and older players battling for limited positions. We lost some seniors last year but we still have a lot of talent. Most of the team members who have been with me for three years have experience; they just need to get more motivated. The players this year seem to be truly dedicated and team players." Mr. Meddock understands rebuilding is a slow process. "It takes 3-5 years for any program to become comfortable to a new coach and perform their best for you," says Mr. Meddock.

There are three new assistant coaches this year. Mr. Mark Morvick, who played two years ago for Mr. Meddock, Jim Gibson, and Jeff Modrovich, who is a substitute teacher for Ambridge. Mr. Meddock feels, "since the assistant coaches are younger they will be able to relate to the players more."

Mr. Meddock hopes to form a "Posse", a group of "crazy players". "The ninth through twelfth men on the team who are super quick but not as offensively minded. We'll put them in at the end of the quarter to give our starters a rest and wear down the opposing team's starters."

Mr. Meddock hope there are more fans this year. To help this, the pep band will play at all the section games and Mr. Meddock is trying to organize the Bridger Brigade. The Bridger Brigade was a male cheering section the first year Mr. Meddock coached. The members of the Bridger Brigade were good friends of the players. They purchased t-shirts and painted their faces to get the crowd pumped. Mr. Meddock is also welcoming females to join the Bridger Brigade.

Sophomore basketball player, Joe Mazzotta says, "Overall it should be a challenging season this year. We will win a lot more games. We have more experience and I feel that our whole team can score. We will give non-stop hustle for 36 minutes. So everyone come out and watch us.

Friday, November 28, Saturday, November 29, and Monday December 1, the weekend after Thanksgiving, Ambridge Bridger Basketball Team participates in a tip off tournament, " The best tip-off tournament in the state," says Mr. Meddock. The Bridgers play Mohawk at 7:30 on Friday. Some other teams they will be playing that weekend are Blackhawk, Central Catholic, Peters Township, Knoch, Aliquippa, and Quaker Valley. Come out and support the basketball team!

Schweikert self-motivated and determined

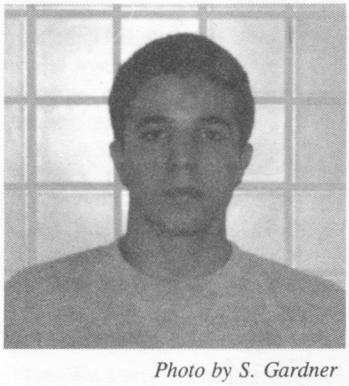


Photo by S. Gardner

by Peggy Madonna

For many years, Andy Schweikert has been a very dedicated athlete. He has competed in Ambridge boys' soccer, cross country and has been on the Track Team. From a young age, Andy has been involved in sports. He has been playing soccer since he was four years old and has been running since the third grade.

Andy, a junior, feels that this past season has been a success and he is proud of his performances. "I think I did pretty well," said Andy. Andy's only regret is that the soccer team did not go as far in the playoffs as he would have liked. He is also excited by the prospect of going to the Section Champs with the cross country team next year. He noted that the team lacked experienced teammates, but there will be more seniors competing next year.

With his many accomplishments and great talent, Andy has made quite a reputation for himself within this school. Just the mention of his name usually brings the response of "That kid is an incredible athlete."

Andy's interest in sports began when he was very young, while watching his brother, Hoby, compete in soccer and running. These are activities in which both he and his brother excel.

Andy also performs exceptionally in the classroom and is involved in other activities such as German Club and Junior Class.

Although Andy is unsure about his future, he intends to continue running cross country in college. He has not yet decided on a career, but has no intentions of becoming a professional athlete, "Sports will always be a hobby," he said.

Andy accredits much of his success to his family for always supporting him and also to the Cross Country Team Coach, Rich Shoup. Andy thanks the coach for always encouraging him and because he "made it fun."

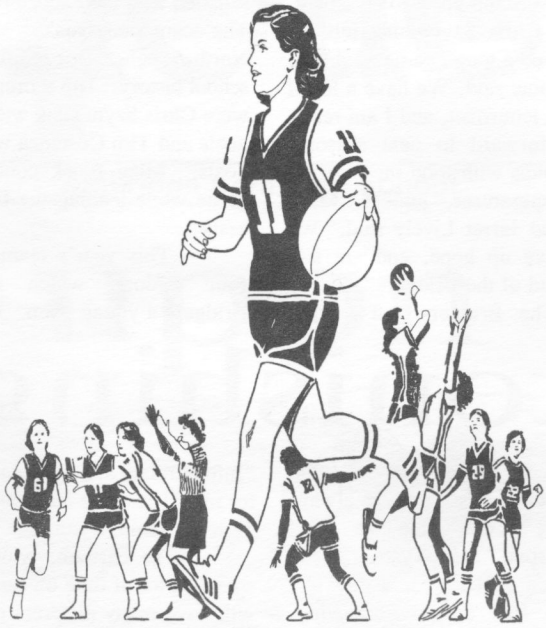
It is evident that Andy is self-motivated and determined in whatever he chooses to do.

"Nucleus" returns for '97-'98 Lady Bridgers

by Joel Brady

The Ambridge Girls' Basketball team is looking forward to what they hope will be a stellar season.

Even before practices had begun, Head Coach Tom Cvitkovic had a feeling the team would have a strong season. The solid play by the girls that he has seen at the summer leagues and open gyms, along with the return of the basic "nucleus" of last year's team, which missed the playoffs by one game, has given Coach Cvitkovic his positive outlook. "We lost only two girls from last year's team [to graduation]," he states, "and we also have a lot of freshmen this year."



Instrumental to the "nucleus" of the team are its probable co-captains: Heidi Vukovacan, Jeanette Guido, and Livia Wright. Although hesitant to make any predictions for the season, Livia Wright said, "We have a good shot at the playoffs; I expect an improvement over last year's team. What do I know, though, I'm retarded."

The understatement in Livia's words is reflected among many team members and coaches, apparently hoping an expected strong season will speak for itself. Highlights should include skilled play from everyone, a berth in the playoffs, and defending the team's championship title in one of the two tournaments they will enter, hosted by Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, another high school.

Coach Cvitkovic states, "I think more students should come out and support the team, because I feel we're going to have an exciting team this year. I also expect big years from the three captains along with sophomore Jen Orsag."

The junior varsity team's games are played at 6 PM, and the varsity team's games begin at 7:30 PM on Monday and Thursday nights.

Hockey team built on strong foundation

by Carmel Richards

The Ambridge Hockey season has begun. The Freshmen and Varsity teams kicked off this year's season on Monday, November 3, at Fox Chapel. TheVarsity team is lead by Coach Tony Miller and Captain Rob Ryms. The Freshmen coach is Skip Kubacki.

The Varsity team consists of freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors. The Freshmen team consists of players in grades six through nine. Unlike last year, there is no Junior Varsity team. The reason for fewer teams was lack of student interest.

This year's Varsity Team has a strong foundation of seven seniors including two foreign exchange students, Veli-Matti Kuronen and Stefan Krattiger. Sophomore Brian Grinnik is also an important member of the team.

Sixteen games are played in a season. Eight games are played at home, and eight games away. Some away games will be played at Harmerville, Belmont, and Pittsburgh. All of Ambridge's practices and home games are held at Blade Runners Ice Complex in Marshall Township (near Cranberry).

Although Ambridge was crushed in their first game against Fox Chapel, the team members have high expectations for this season. "Fox Chapel is one of the best teams," said Matt Kubacki, a member of the Freshmen team. Since they just recently played their first game, many players could not yet comment on this year's team. Steve Smith, a member of the Varsity team, said, "The season just started!"

Come out and support the Ambridge Hockey teams. It may be a great season!

Successful season pleases head coach and players

by Jenni Richards

The 1997 season of the Ambridge Area High School girls' soccer team will forever be remembered as a season of firsts. Led by Coach Dale Vukmonovich, Assistant Coach Larry Frangione, and team captains Kelly Lavin, Justine Elliot, Rayna Cafasso and Jocelyn Frangione, the girls accomplished much in 16 games.

According to Coach Vukmonovich, the season was "excellent." The girls finished with a record of 10-4-2, and came in third in their division. First place went to Quaker Valley and second place to Hopewell, whom the Ambridge girls tied 1-1. This tie was the first tie or victory Ambridge has ever had against the Hopewell team.

Top scorers for the season were seniors Justine Elliot and Jeanette Guido, and Junior Megan Spec.

Ambridge also made the playoffs for the first time in team history, though they lost to Fox Chapel in the opening round. At halftime the score was a 1-1 tie, but by the end of the game, Fox Chapel had a 7-1 lead. Ambridge was disappointed, but no one was complaining. "I was very pleased", said Coach Vukmonovich. "Pleased and happy. The girls did an excellent job."

The players were pleased with their performance as well. Said Junior Missy Beeman, "Considering we never made it to the playoffs before, it was a great, but cold experience."

Teammate Megan Spec summed up the season by saying "It was a long season with many injuries, but we overcame them and achieved a lot of firsts."

Heartbreaking playoff loss ignites players/fans for next season

by Jenn Hooks

The Ambridge Boys' Soccer Team faced Fox Chapel in a class AAA first round playoff match. The Bridgers were handed a heart-breaking 3-0 loss and an early exit from playoff contention.

The freezing weather during the game and the size, strength and experience of the Fox Chapel Foxes may have played a part in the loss. The Bridger's defense and offense did a great job, but some Bridger players were too upset to comment. Captain, Chris Szymoniak felt the team played a tough game, and on a positive note said,"We have a lot of returning letterman, and I am really looking forward to next season!" Faithful fans withstood the freezing cold temperatures, juniors, Mark Lyons and Jarret Lively said," We never gave up hope, and are still very proud of the Bridgers!"

The Bridgers had a very impressive season, and should be satisfied with their accomplishments. The team tied Quaker Valley and North Allegheny for the first time in school history. Top scorers this year were Chris Szymoniak with eighteen goals and Tim Costanza with fifteen goals. Mike Bajek controlled the game while leading the Bridgers in assists.

This year's team had only four seniors, which made the Bridgers a young team. Next year, however, the team will be filled with experienced seniors who will be a force to be reckoned with.

Fans Caron Loftus and Kara Hudson said enthusiastically, "We can't wait to go to games next year!" While enthralled with this year's performance, Bridger soccer fans are looking forward to an even more exceptional season next year.

The astonishing Wyatt

by Peggy Madonna

Well, in case you have not yet noticed, the Silhouette now features a new cartoon this year. Yes, Earl the Superhero is gone — dead, and a new cartoon was born — and with it, a new cartoonist — Wyatt Richards. (Well, technically he was born sixteen years ago.)

Wyatt has been drawing since he was a little boy. He said this was always his answer to boredom. "I've got a wild imagination. My mind is always drifting. I don't have a good attention span," said Wyatt.

It's difficult for a guy like Wyatt to find time for drawing. Wyatt said he tries to squeeze it in "when I'm not with my many girlfriends."

Everyday life is Wyatt's main inspiration. Specifically, Television Informercials are a huge source of amusement for him. "Infomercials are very entertaining for me. There is a lot of information in them," said Wyatt.

The cartoon, which Wyatt spends a lot of time on each month, will have many different characters throughout the year, but two main characters will remain constant. Wyatt feels that the character is "a little bit like me, and the opposite of me." He describes one character, The Astonishing Timmy, as "astonishing." The other is Robert, an exchange student from China. There will also be various villains making appearances each month.

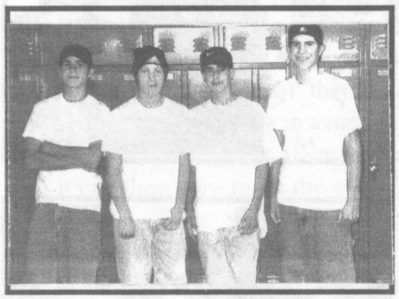
Concerning last month's cartoon, "I had to brush away a few tears," Wyatt admits. His only advice to readers for understanding the cartoon better is: "Remember kids, read the first bubble...first." He also says, "I had to work the bugs out," but Wyatt feels that the cartoon was a success.

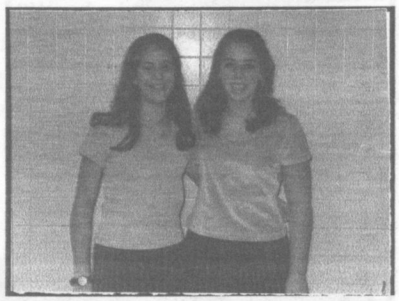
LAST TIME WE LEFT OUR HEROES, THEY WERE ON DICK'S TRAIL.
BY: WYATT RICHARDS
NO SIGN OF HIM IN THE GIRLS ROOM.
LETS LOOK AGAIN.
FINALLY, THEY FIND DICK IN THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE. WHERE HE REVEALS HIS PLAN.
I'M HERE TAKE OVER YOUR SCHOOL, BY HYPNOTIZING YOUR TEACHERS AND OTHER FACULTY.
OH, MY GOD. MR.DWARFAL HAS BEEN DRUGGED.
OOHHHH
I'M AN IDIOT.
NO,HE ALWAYS TALKS LIKE THAT...
AND A FIGHT BREAKS OUT...
FEAR ME!!
FEED ME!!
NO, I BRUISE EASILY I'M LIKE A FRUIT!!
AFTER THEY DEFEAT THE VILLIANS. TIMMY AND ROBERT FIND OUT WHO ARE BEHIND THE MASKS.
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS...
I'm tired & I'm incredibly old.

Silhouette

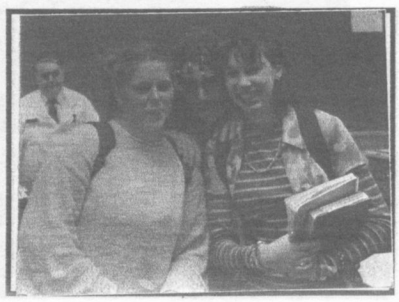
Vol.70 No. 1-B Ambridge Area High School November Photo Supplement

TWIN DAY

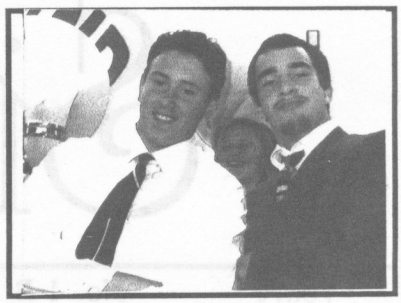


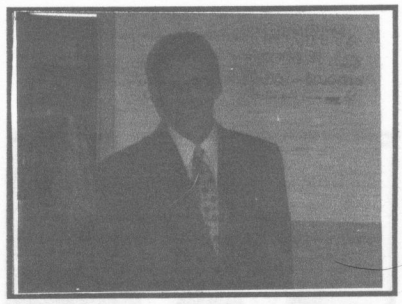


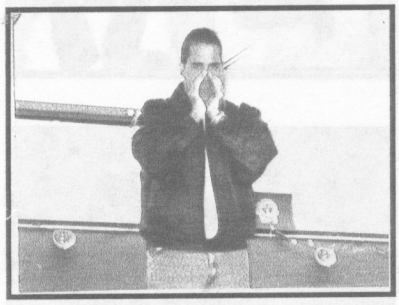
CRAZY HAIR/CLASH DAY



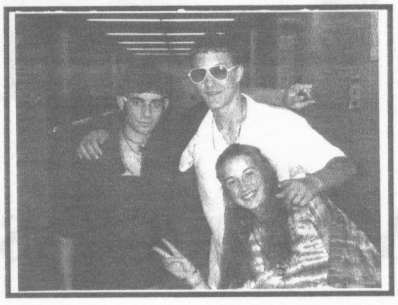
Senior Dress Up / Underclassmen Dress Down Day

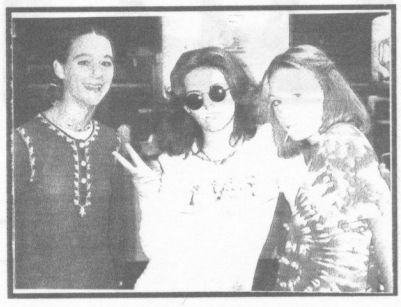


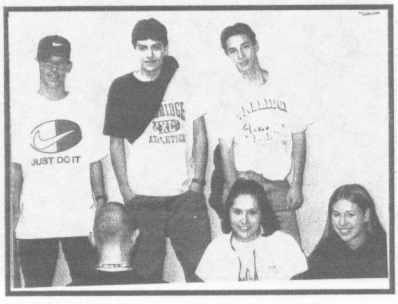




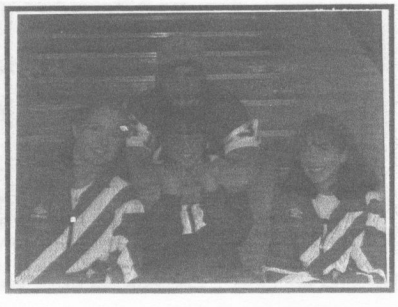
Psychedelic Day

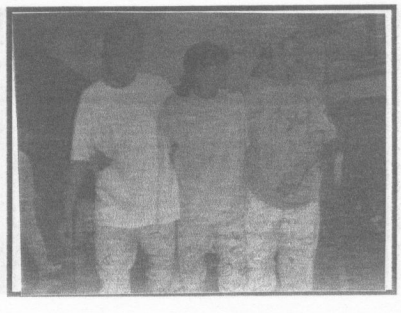






Spirit Day





Silhouette

Vol. 70 No. 2-A Ambridge Area High School November Supplement

Lady Bridgers fulfill season long expectations

by Christopher Tuft

Wow! What a season! After starting the season with very low expectations, the girls volleyball team ended up going to the state championship.

"I think that we had the best volleyball team we've ever had," says junior defensive specialist, Erin Staryzak. "It was really great."

The started the season by beating one of their toughest opponents - Blackhawk. "In one week we beat them three times," said Matt Gerega, team statistician, "We beat them twice in a tournament and once in a match. They're a tough team but we always seem to step it up when they're on the court."

"This year was the best year we've ever had," said senior Brianne Mallozzi. This is reflected in the outstanding accomplishments of this fine team which include: being the section 6AAA champions with a 14-0 record, extending their section undefeated record to 118 games in a row, being a runner up in the Midwest Atlantic Conference (MAC Conference), ending the season in fourth place in the WPIAL out of 62 AAA teams and placing ninth in the state out of over 350 teams.

This year's team was a very young one. The five seniors on the team were: Kim Harrington, Emily Taylor, Suzanne Fleeson, Brianne Malozzi, and Kate Snyder. "There's a lot of young talent on that team," said Matt Gerega, "There are four or five juniors, but there's a lot of sophomores and freshmen that, if they keep playing, are going to be really good. They've definitely built up a team."

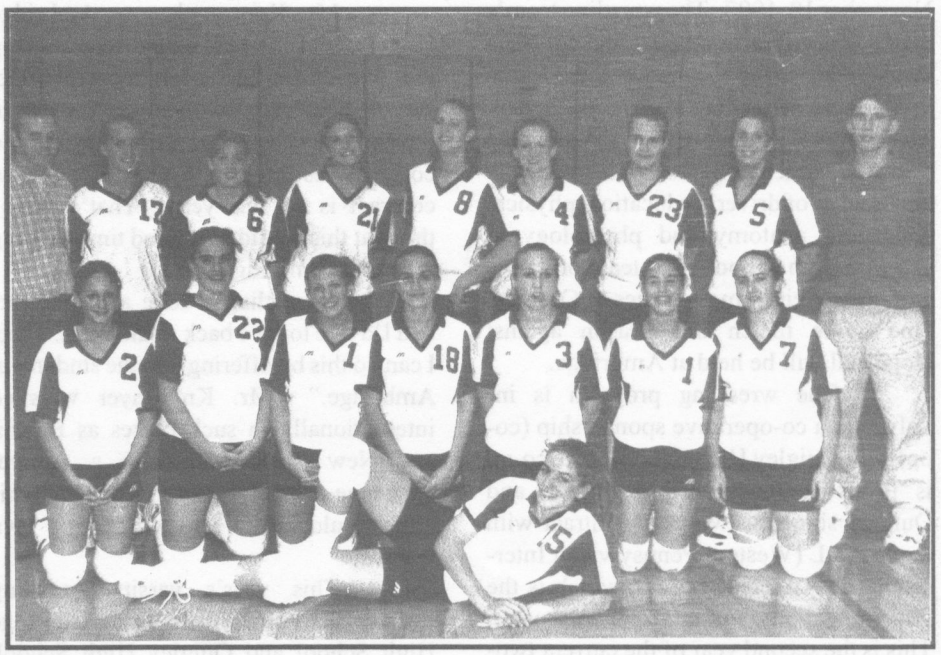
Coach Donna Pfeifer was especially proud of her team with its impressive 17-3 overall record. That is not the only reason she is proud of them, though of the 25 girls that were on the team, 22 had a grade point average of 3.5 or higher. "We're students first and then we're players," she said.

Several school records were broken during this fantastic season. Emily Gerega now holds the record for Best Serve at 96%. The previous record was 95% held by Amy Riccardi. The record for 3-passes previously held by Mandi Hrychowian with 234 is now held by Emily Taylor with 254. Suzanne Fleeson seized the record of Most Digs with 329 from Tina Kowalski who had 130.

Concerning the amount of student support, Mrs. Pfiefer was disappointed with the turnout but pleased with those who did come to the games. The implied message she received from the students was that volleyball was not as important as football or basketball. She said that she tries to produce something that the entire school can be proud of.

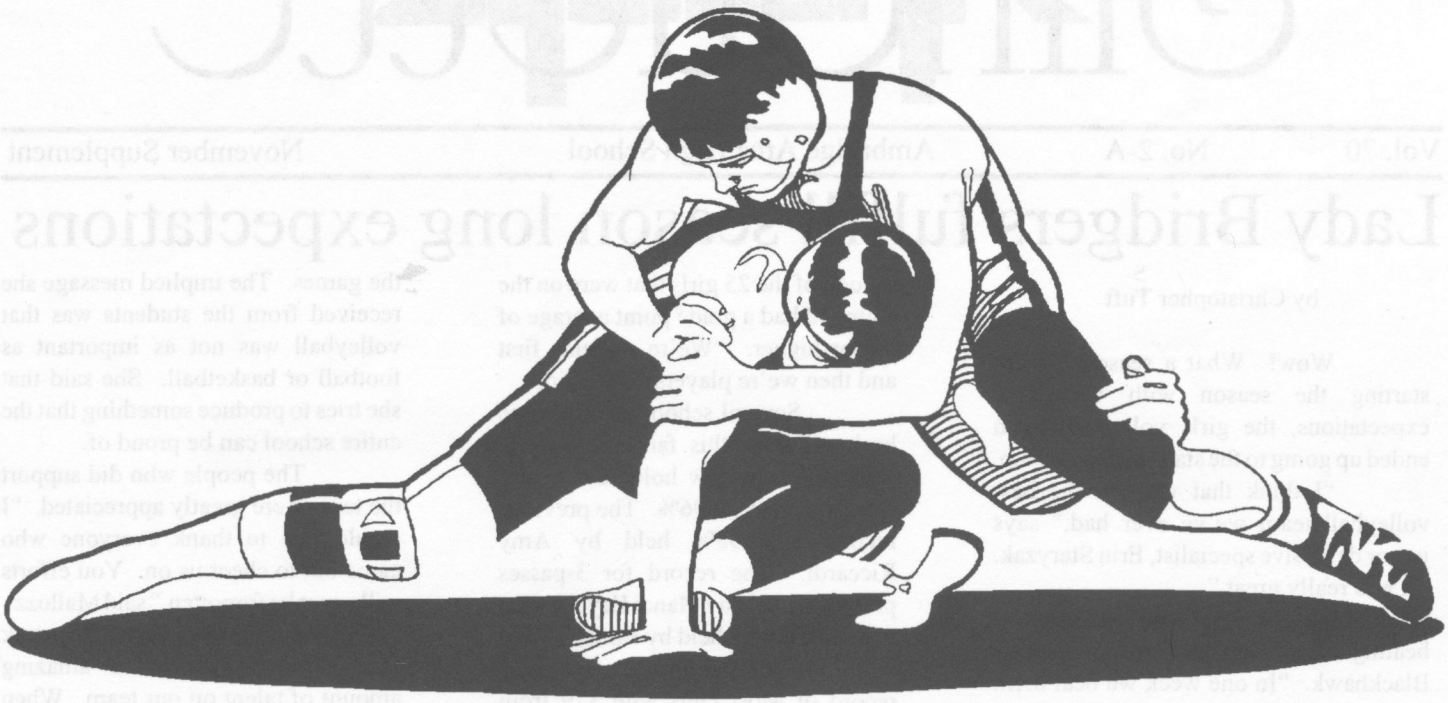
The people who did support the team were greatly appreciated. "I would like to thank everyone who came out to cheer us on. You efforts will never be forgotten," said Mallozzi.

As junior Lauren Wozniak said, "We had such an amazing amount of talent on our team. When we put it all together, we were unstoppable."



***Pictured above are the 1997-98 Ambridge Area Girls' Volleyball Team. Front row**: Brianne Mallozzi; **Second Row**: Sara Kalabokes, Amanda Pfeifer, Erin Staryszak, Emily Gerega, Susan Fleeson, Laurn Colonna, Sara Duke; **Third row**: Coach Rob Pack, Cristy Neese, Kim Harrington, Laurn Wozniak, Emily Taylor, Kate Snyder, Kim Pinchot , Melanie Johnson, Coach Matt Curry.*

Ambridge reconsiders Quigley Co-op



by Carole Bunting

The Ambridge/Quigley Wrestling Team entered their season on November 10, 1997. The wrestling team's matches begin in December and continue through the first or second week of March.

The wrestling team is coached by Mr. Ed Driscoll, who is also the assistant principal, athletic director, baseball coach and teacher of driver's education, physical education, anatomy and physiology at Quigley High School. The team practices and hosts their home matches at Quigley. One home match this season against Hopewell will be held at Ambridge.

The wrestling program is involved in a co-operative sponsorship (co-op) with Quigley High School. The co-op is in its fourth year. Ambridge and Quigley signed a two-year contract with the WPIAL (Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League), which is the governing body for high school sports. This is the second year of the current two-year contract, and the contract can be renewed as long as both schools want to remain in the co-op.

The co-op was formed because the number of students on the wrestling team is low in both schools. Quigley and Ambridge were already involved in a co-op with the football department, so they decided to join their wrestling teams to accommodate the interested students.

Mr. Knopsnyder, an Ambridge High School teacher, would like to bring the wrestling team back to Ambridge. Having been very involved in wrestling in the past, he would love the opportunity to coach wrestling at Ambridge. "The contract is up this year. That's why I thought this would be a good time to bring it back to Ambridge."

"Wrestling's done a lot for me, and I'd like to give back to the sport. I feel I can do this by offering it to the students at Ambridge." Mr. Knopsnyer wrestled internationally in such places as Hawaii and New Zealand through a cultural exchange team. "I just think a school this size should be able to support its own team."

This year's varsity wrestling team consists of members from Ambridge High School and Quigley High School. Five members make up the Ambridge part of the team: Tim Painter, a senior; Shaun Lyle, a junior; Jim Covert, a junior; Sissy Lyle, a sophomore and Les Pinlend, a sophomore.

Coach Driscoll said, "Wrestling is the most demanding physical and mental sport that kids participate in. It's for kids that are greatly disciplined." The team practices six days a week, with Sundays and Christmas Day off; they even have to practice on Thanksgiving.

"You're out there all by yourself," said Coach Driscoll. "It's a sport where there's no help from your buddies." The members, however, form a "close-knit fraternity."

The members not only have to be disciplined about practicing but also about their weight. There are 13 weight classes, ranging from 103 pounds to 275 pounds. Coach Driscoll said that the players do not have to lose weight, only stay in the same weight class for the season. Some wrestlers even freeze their Thanksgiving dinner and eat it in March when the season is over.

Every weight class that is not represented at a match by Ambridge or Quigley and is represented by the opposing school gives the opposing school six points for forfeit. The more weight classes filled, the less points the team loses from forfeit. Anyone interested in wrestling should contact Coach Driscoll for further information.